

AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

NOV. 21- NOV. 27 1988

ATTRIBUTION, IF REQUIRED SHOULD BE TO:
"WESTERN DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN ISLAMABAD"

2. SUMMARY:

A.

COMBAT ACTIVITY DURING THE WEEK WAS FOCUSED ON THE SALANG ROAD SOUTH OF THE SALANG PASS. WHILE INCOMING ROCKETS WERE ABOUT THE SAME AS THE PREVIOUS WEEK THE FIRING OF SCUD MISSILES RESUMED WITH EIGHT LAUNCHES ON THREE DIFFERENT DAYS. THE SALANG ROAD WAS CUT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AND THE ROAD FROM KABUL TO JALALABAD REMAINS CLOSED TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC. MUJAHEDIN PRESSURE ON HERAT AND KANDAHAR HAS MADE LIFE IN THESE CITIES INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT. THE REGIME CONTINUES TO USE PRESSGANG TACTICS TO REPLENISH THE RANKS OF THE MILITARY. THERE WERE REPORTS OF AN ATTEMPTED COUP IN KANDAHAR. DESPITE RESUPPLY ATTEMPTS KABUL CITY SERVICES CONTINUE TO BE STRAINED.

3. KABUL CITY MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS: WITH THE EXCEPTION OF APPARENT FIGHTING BETWEEN TWO RA MILITARY GROUPS NEAR AN RA GARRISON IN SHAPE NAU FROM 2030 TO 2100 ON NOVEMBER 23, THERE WAS NO COMBAT WITHIN KABUL CITY DURING THE WEEK. THERE WERE REPORTS OF SS-1 SCUD MISSILE FIRINGS ON NOVEMBER 23 (ONE AT 1300), NOVEMBER 24 (THREE, POSSIBLY FOUR, BETWEEN 1000 AND 1100) AND NOVEMBER 25 (FOUR AT 1300 OBSERVED BY DIPLOMATS) BRINGING THE TOTAL MINIMUM SCUD FIRINGS TO 43. THERE WERE THREE CONFIRMED INCOMING ROCKET INCIDENTS. BETWEEN 1000 AND 1100 ON NOVEMBER 24, TWO ROCKETS IMPACTED NEAR THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN DARULAMAN. AT 1030 ON THE SAME DAY A ROCKET FELL INTO A VEGETABLE MARKET NORTHWEST OF THE SOVIET MILITARY HOSPITAL IN SHAPE NAU. AT THE SAME HOUR A ROCKET IMPACTED IN SHOPS IN PUL-I MAHMOOD KHAN NEAR THE KABUL RIVER. NO ESTIMATES OF CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE WERE AVAILABLE ON ANY OF THESE ROCKETINGS. AT 1930 ON NOVEMBER 24, A

ECMB ON A MILLIE BUS EXPLODED WHILE THE BUS WAS PARKED AT A BUS STOP IN KARNE FARVAN NEAR THE CONTINENTAL HOTEL. THREE BUSES WERE DAMAGED BUT THERE WERE NO REPORTS OF CASUALTIES.

4. KAPUL PROVINCE MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

A. KAPUL WEST: DIPLOMATS AT KHARGA NOVEMBER 25 REPORTED OCCASIONALLY INTENSE SMALL ARMS FIRE IN THE PLAIN BETWEEN KHARGA LAKE AND PACHMAN BUT NO ARTILLERY. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF HIGH-ALTITUDE BOMBINGS BY SOVIET SU-26 AIRCRAFT BUT THIS WAS MOSTLY CONCENTRATED IN THE SNOWMOUNTAIN.

B. KAPUL NORTH/PARWAN: THERE WAS HEAVY FIGHTING ALONG THE SALANG ROAD IN THE SNOWMOUNTAIN INTO PARWAN. RA AND SOVIET MILITARY UNITS MANAGED TO KEEP THE SALANG ROAD FROM BEING CLOSED FOR MORE THAN A FEW HOURS BUT THE DISRUPTIONS WERE ENOUGH TO CAUSE TEMPORARY FUEL SHORTAGES IN KAPUL. ON NOVEMBER 23 MUJAHEDIN DESTROYED TWO RA BTR'S WITH ROCKET LAUNCHERS WHILE THE VEHICLES WERE PASSING THROUGH CHARIKAR.

C. KAPUL EAST: THE KAPUL-JALALABAD ROAD REMAINED CLOSED TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC DURING THE WEEK. THERE WERE REPORTS OF HEAVY FIGHTING IN THE SOFUEI AREA BUT THE POWER PYLONS REPORTEDLY DESTROYED SEVERAL WEEKS EARLIER WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO KAPUL POWER SHORTAGES APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN REPAIRED.

D. KAPUL SOUTH: LITTLE MILITARY ACTIVITY WAS REPORTED IN THE AREA BUT THERE WERE REPORTS OF CONTINUED SOVIET AIRCRAFT BOMBING ALONG THE ROAD TO LOGAR.

5. L. PROVINCIAL MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

HERAT: A RECENT VISITOR TO HERAT STATED THERE ARE 1500 SOVIET TROOPS IN THE CITY AND SOME WERE REPLACED WITHIN THE PAST TWO WEEKS. THE SOVIETS KEEP THE ROAD OPEN TO TORGHUAI TO ENSURE AMMUNITION AND OTHER MILITARY SUPPLIES ARE AVAILABLE PUT FOOD AND FUEL FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION IS IN SHORT SUPPLY. ELECTRIC POWER IS AVAILABLE ONLY AT NIGHT. ROCKETING IS FREQUENT AND RA TANKS WHICH USED TO BE KEPT OUTSIDE OF THE CITY NOW REGULARLY PATROL INSIDE THE CITY ITSELF. IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS MORE THAN 1500 HOUSES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED BY ROCKETS. RA MORALE IS POOR AND THE GOVERNOR OF HERAT NOW REPORTEDLY SPENDS MORE TIME IN KAPUL.

KANDAHAR: RECENT TRAVELERS TO KANDAHAR REPORT THAT WHILE THE AIRPORT IS STILL CLOSED TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC, MILITARY TRAFFIC IS FREQUENT BOTH AT NIGHT

AND DURING THE DAY. RA AN-12 AND AN-32 TRANSPORTS BRING IN AMMUNITION AND SUPPLIES AND RETURN TO KAPUL WITH CASUALTIES. ROCKETING OF THE AIRPORT IS ALMOST CONSTANT AND THE RA MILITARY AT THE AIRPORT LIVE AND WORK IN BUNKERS. THE AIRCRAFT USUALLY DO NOT SHUT OFF THEIR ENGINES STAYING ON THE GROUND ONLY LONG ENOUGH TO UNLOAD, LOAD UP AND TAKE OFF. RA MIG-21 AIRCRAFT TAKE OFF TO SOME MUJAHEDIN LOCATIONS IN THE AREA AND RETURN IN A FEW MINUTES. ON NOVEMBER 22 THE BODIES OF 12 RA MILITARY WERE FLOWN TO KABUL FROM KANDAHAR.

KANDAHAR: ON NOVEMBER 22 AND 21 THERE WAS HEAVY FIGHTING IN THE TORKHAM AREA AND THERE WERE REPORTS ON NOVEMBER 27 THAT TORKHAM HAD BEEN RETAKEN BY THE MUJAHEDIN.

MARCA4: RECENT VISITORS FROM MAIDAN SHAR REPORT THE MUJAHEDIN ESSENTIALLY CONTROL THE CITY ALTHOUGH THEY DO NOT OCCUPY IT. THE RA ROCKETS THE CITY DAILY. MUCH OF THE CITY'S POPULATION, CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE, HAS LEFT AND MADE ITS WAY TO KAPUL.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS: PRESSGANGING OF STUDENTS AND OTHERS CONTINUES. TWO DIPLOMATS OF MILITARY AGE WERE STOPPED BY AFGHAN OFFICIALS ON THE STREET AND ASKED TO SHOW PROOF OF MILITARY SERVICE. ALTHOUGH THE OFFICIALS APOLOGIZED TO THE DIPLOMATS FOR THE MISTAKE THEY WERE NOT SO GENEROUS WITH AFGHAN CITIZENS. A NEARLY TRUCK CONTAINING WHAT APPEARED TO BE STUDENTS HAD IT CLEAR WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE WHO DID NOT HAVE DOCUMENTATION TO PROVE THEIR MILITARY STATUS.

7. POLITICAL/MILITARY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

A. KANDAHAR COUP ATTEMPT. SOVIET PRESS SPOKESMAN GERASIMOV REPORTED AN ATTEMPTED COUP TOOK PLACE ON NOVEMBER 22-21 IN KANDAHAR WHEN SOME MILITARY LEADERS OF THE PROVINCE ATTEMPTED TO LEAD SOME 400 "EXTREMISTS" INTO THE SECOND CORPS HEADQUARTERS BUT WERE THWARTED WHEN LOYAL REGIME SOLDIERS AMPUSHED THE EXTREMISTS AND FORCED THEM TO RETREAT. SECOND CORPS COMMANDER ULOMI, WHO WAS IN KABUL FOR A MEDAL PRESENTATION CEREMONY, RETURNED TO KANDAHAR NOVEMBER 23. NO FURTHER DETAILS ON THE ATTEMPTED COUP HAVE BEEN RELEASED AND NORMALLY INFORMED OBSERVERS HAVE NO INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ALLEGED EVENT. SOVIET MOTIVATION IN PUBLICIZING IT IS UNCLEAR.

B. CONTINUED PRESSURE ON KABUL CITY SERVICES: DURING THE PAST WEEK ADDITIONAL FUEL AND FOOD STOCKS WERE BROUGHT INTO KAPUL, ALLEVIATING SOMEWHAT THE LONG LINES AT FUEL STATIONS AND SHORTAGES OF STAPLE FOOD ITEMS SUCH AS RICE. HOWEVER, THE RE-CLOSING OF THE KABUL-JALALABAD ROAD HAS CONTINUED TO PREVENT

PAKISTANI FOOLSTUFFS FROM REACHING KABUL. IN ADDITION TO MILITARY PRESSURES ON THE SALANG ROAD LIFELINE TO THE SOVIET UNION, THE ONSET OF WINTER WILL FURTHER COMPLICATE RESUPPLY EFFORTS. THE FIRST SNOW HAS FALLEN IN THE HIGH MOUNTAINS AND TEMPERATURES HAVE FALLEN BELOW FREEZING AT NIGHT DURING THE PAST WEEK. DIPLOMATS REPORT THAT AFGHANS ARE BEGINNING TO HOARD ESSENTIAL ITEMS IN ANTICIPATION OF FURTHER SHORTAGES. THE HOARDING PUTS ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON THE SUPPLY SYSTEM. AT LEAST TWO SUGAR BOARDERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED BY THE RA.

B. 4. MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS

A. EARLY CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS: KABUL MEDIA CARRIED A NUMBER OF STORIES CONCERNING THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS RANGING FROM PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS TO KABUL UNIVERSITY. UNMENTIONED IS THE FACT THAT SCHOOLS ARE CLOSING CONSIDERABLY EARLIER THAN USUAL. INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE EARLY CLOSINGS ARE ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO ALLEVIATE FUEL SHORTAGES.

B. AFGHAN AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN IN PAKISTAN: KABUL MEDIA ARE STATING THAT THE TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT THAT WAS SHOT DOWN INSIDE PAKISTAN NOVEMBER 19 WAS LOST AND DESPITE EMERGENCY SIGNALS FOR ASSISTANCE WAS SHOT DOWN INTENTIONALLY. IN ADDITION, THE PA REGIME CLAIMS THAT THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT IS OBSTRUCTING THE RETURN OF THE BODIES OF THE VICTIMS.